

CHARIVARIA.

"WILD Australia" is announced as one of the attractions of the Festival of Empire; but we understand that the wildness of Australia is a tame thing compared with the wildness of Canada over the temporary banning of the Battle of Chateauguay as her contribution to the Empire Pageant.

It has frequently been suggested that too much legislation in favour of the Labouring Classes will prove demoralising to them. We have not had to wait long for a concrete example of this. Man is willing to exchange his independence for it. The Manx Labour Party has complained that it is at a disadvantage in the matter of social legislation, and is proposing annexation to the United Kingdom.

Never, we suppose, was so much attention devoted to the subject of dress as to-day. The POSTMASTER-GENERAL, it is announced, is making arrangements for an improved form of headgear for the telephone girls.

Describing a case of highway robbery, *The Observer* tells us that the police found the men who were charged with the offence drinking in a public-house. "When the police entered, they tried to get rid of the coppers by passing them over the bar, but the barmaid would not accept them." This spread of slang to the columns of one of our oldest newspapers is, we fear, a sign of the times.

We are indebted for the following Charivarium to a gentleman who appeared the other day at the Wood Green Police Court. "May I," he cried impressively, "never be placed in this dock again if I'm not telling the truth!"

The proprietors of the Dublin Theatre Royal, we are told, have added immensely to the comfort of their patrons by covering the backs of the seats with thin metal, thus protecting playgoers

from a stab in the back when a lady pins her hat to the other side of the seat. Meanwhile Londoners have to put up with old-fashioned and cumbersome coats of mail.

"What wonderful versatility!" remarked an old lady who, after inspecting the QUEEN VICTORIA Memorial, read the announcement on an Exhibition placard: "GREAT DISPLAY OF FIREWORKS BY BROCK."

There is a persistent rumour afoot to the effect that, when the Germans take London, the premises of the Royal Automobile Club, and not Buckingham



[Extract from a Physical Culture Expert's Circular:—"If YOU THINK I CLAIM TOO MUCH FOR MY SYSTEM AND WISH FOR FURTHER PROOFS, FAVOUR ME WITH A CALL, WHEN YOU CAN SEE THE MAN WITH WHOM YOU ARE DEALING, AND I ASSURE YOU THAT YOU WILL THEN BE CONVINCED."]

Expert. "ARE YOU CONVINCED?"

Enquirer. "ABSOLUTELY."

Palace, will become the Imperial residence.

"Postcards are to be sold in future at their face value." Actresses whose features appear on them take this to mean that our cards will cost us more.

A commercial man's view of the payment of Members: "Now, Mr. BALFOUR—he's wonderful value for £400; but some of the others . . ."

A fact—but none the worse for that, we hope. "Oh, Mum," said cook, "I've received a present of a pair of gloves, and I don't know who they're from." "Perhaps they're from an unknown admirer," suggested the mistress. "Ah, as likely as not," said cook, brightening up. "I'll write and ask him."

A GRAVE OVERSIGHT.

DEAR MR. PUNCH.—May I through the medium of your columns call the attention of the gentleman who is responsible for the Coronation Stands in the Strand district of Westminster to a grave oversight in their construction? He stated, some time ago, that these stands are constructed to support four times the weight of the people they are to accommodate in order to withstand the strain when the spectators all sway to one side to see some object of interest (such as the procession—always an object of interest on these occasions).

This may have answered well enough in past processions, but in view of the change in the physical condition of the people, I maintain that on the present occasion this margin of strength is quite inadequate. In the pages of an esteemed contemporary we have constantly read that the weight of schoolboys is going up by leaps and bounds owing to the retention of the germ and semolina in the Standard Loaf. Now, Sir, that diet is not confined to schoolboys alone, but is being eagerly assimilated three times a day at least by the digestive organs of the British race. To construct these

stands, therefore, without taking into account the increased *avoirdupois* of practically every spectator, is, I am convinced, to court a national disaster, and having taken seats for a large party of nephews and nieces I speak from a vitally interested point of view.

Yours very truly,
"ALARMED AUNT."

"HUNTERS SUMMERED.—OLD PUBLIC SCHOOL MAN will take few Hunters, Summer, on Farm with own, and condition for Season."—*Horse and Hound*.

We are sorry. We hoped he was going to take quite a lot.

"Equal credit is due to Braddell, who in scoring four not out was responsible for quite his best performance in first-class cricket."

Oxford Review.
BRADDELL mustn't overdo it.

A HINT FROM ELSINORE.

WHEN *Hamlet* found the *King* at prayer—
A very soft and easy victim—
He meant to kill him then and there,
Taken behind and unaware,
But checked the previous blade that would have
pricked him.

He could, I say, have "done it pat,"
But, when he made a careful study
Of what it was the *King* was at,
He saw a better way than that,
More practical and every bit as bloody.

"If I should knock him now," he said,
"Kneeling, a self-acknowledged sinner,
He'd never drop to hell like lead,
But fly aloft to heaven instead.
I'll do it later—some day after dinner.

"Selecting with a patient tact
The psychologic situation,
I'll take him in some naughty act
(Dicing, for choice) and get him packed
Without a chance direct to sheer damnation."

Not so our *Hamlets* treat to-day
The Peer repentant and appealing;
Concerned at any cost to slay,
They don't consider how their prey
May haply mount to glory through the ceiling.

Could they but wait to deal the blow
Till, in the pride of overpaid ease,
He lets his new repentance go
And drives the partridge to and fro,
They might despatch him, red with sin, to Hades.

But now—with all his faults confessed,
And saying on his bended knee, "I
Have sinned and lo, I clear my breast!"
He'll rise again, for ever blest,
By favour of the People's Voice (*Vox Dei*). O. S.

COCKTAIL COLLOQUIES;

OR,

ENGLISH AS SHE IS GOING TO BE SPOKE AT THE
CORONATION.

[Referring to the thousands of Americans who are preparing to be in London for the Coronation an imaginative correspondent of the *Hearst News Service* observes that "The argot of Broadway and Market Street will be heard in the land, from the drawing-rooms of Mayfair to the *puttiens* of the Mile End Road." No doubt; and its effect upon a receptive London is here adumbrated.]

I.—KANSAS AT LARGE.

SCENE—A Fashionable At Home.

Lady Arabella Tinterne (to the Countess of Glastonbury, who has just arrived). Why, Mandy Glastonbury, if you ain't a sight for sore eyes! Set you right down there and take your bonnet off. Twen't only last night I was sayin' to Lord Hanko, "Hank, I says, it seems a coon's age since Mandy and Gus was around." And Hank said he reckoned as you all had gotten so chesty since Gus got the title you was figurin' to shake a couple of back numbers like us.

Countess of G. Ain't that just like Hank and his joshing. But, honest, it don't seem like I've been around in a month. You're looking fine.

Lady A. T. Fine as silk. How's Gus? I heard his gout was troubling him again.

C. of G. Quite a siege he had, along in April, but he's around again now and punishin' his three squares. But say, I've got more gossip than you c'd shake a stick at. You remember that woman that was at the theatre with the Ogilvie-Jacksons, the night of the Cadwalladers' box party?

Lady A. T. Looked like she ought to be doing a bathing suit stunt on the Orpheum Circuit. Supposed to be a Nihilist or something.

C. of G. Big husky woman with a yellow wig. That's the one. Well, Sue Cadwallader says . . . (Whispered interchange of gossip.)

Lady A. T. Well, wouldn't that freeze you to the tracks? The gall of the woman! But say, these paid musicians make such a noise you can't hear yourself speak. You come right home with me now in the machine and we'll have a heart-to-heart talk.

C. of G. Nothing doing; I got to get home. The hired girl fired herself this a.m., and Augustus Junior's been sick to his stummick all day from hoggin' too many doughnuts his aunt give him, and his pa is clawin' chunks outen the air because the calciminin's started to peel off of the bathroom ceiling. It's fierce the way things go back on you.

Lady A. T. You pore thing!

C. of G. Can you beat it? Anything stirring at the "Rebeccas" to-morrow night?

Lady A. T. "Votes for Women" night. Some spell-binder from Manchester's going to spiel.

C. of G. Them gabfest artists make me tired. Some of 'em ain't got more sense than a sawdust rabbit. Only last week I was into Hale's notion-store matching a piece of goods when up come that Wrottesley woman and says she's been elected president of the Society for Preaching Political Equality to Domestic Servants or some such a thing, and will I be an honorary vice-president? "Not on your tintype," I says, "I'm plumb wore out now preaching clean carpets to my help, but I ain't so everlastingly bughouse as to finish the job by sending her to huntin' a vote." That got her go at all right. Told me that women like me didn't deserve to have rights, and went off clucking like a Rhode Island red with a new egg.

Lady A. T. Ain't that the limit? Gus says a woman must sure be locoed to go round tearing things loose that a way when she might be out showing herself a good time with her friends. Well, I must be moving. See you at the "Auxiliary" Monday, I suppose?

C. of G. Reckon you will if Augustus's foot don't go back on him and the plumbing holds up and the footman doesn't get on a toot. S'long.

Lady A. T. S'long, Mandy.

ALGOL.

A Sporting Offer.

From a circular:

"We shall be glad to send you a selection for your approval, or better still, if you will call, we will guarantee to 'boot you' with a greater degree of comfort and gladness than you have heretofore experienced. Why not come along to-day!"

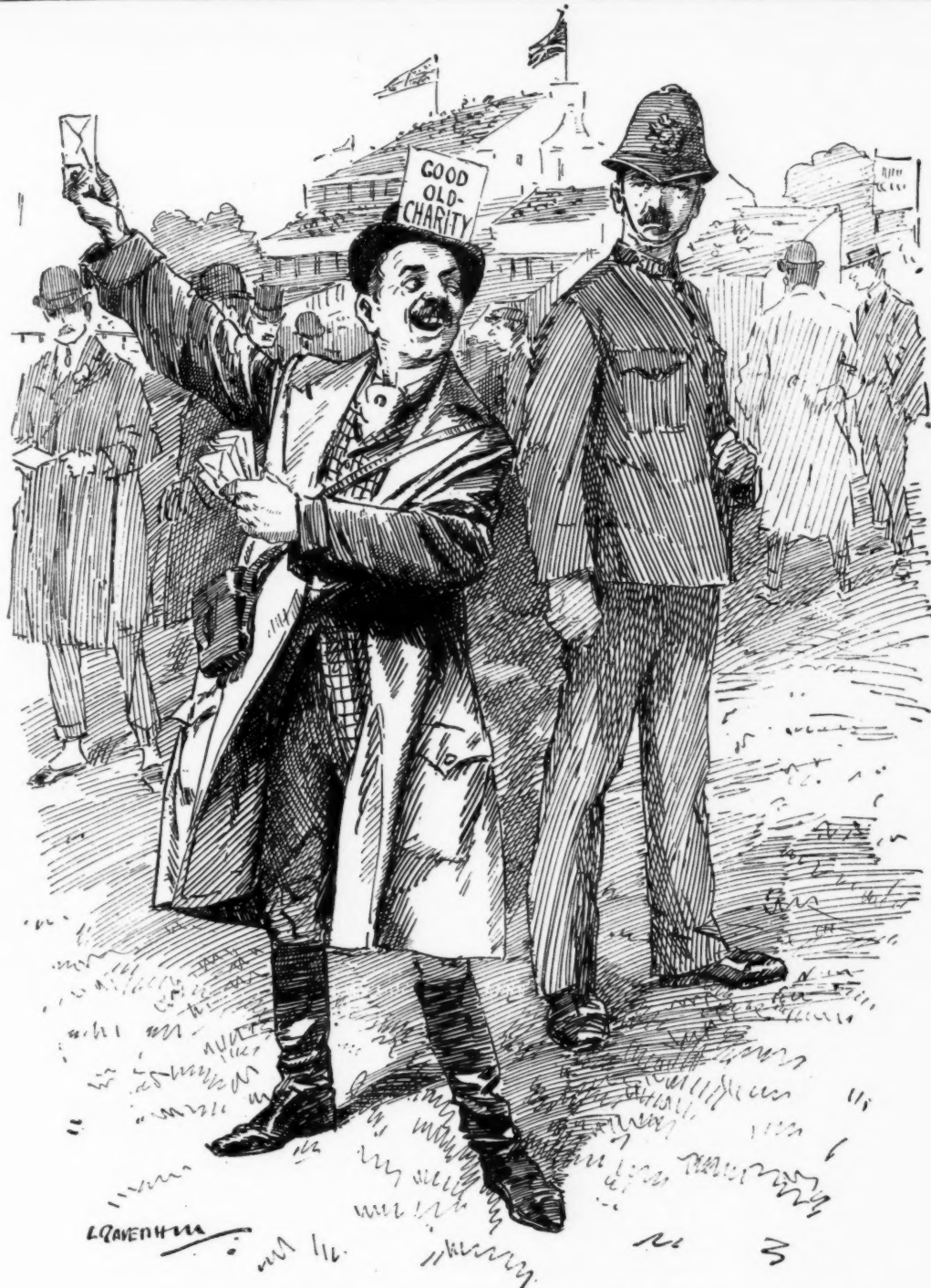
The following paragraph comes all the way from Devonshire in time to be included in our very late news:—

"Yesterday morning the German Emperor visited the Zoological Gardens, and lunched with Lord Haldane."—*Devon and Exeter Gazette*. On second thoughts it is, perhaps, too offensive to re-print.

"As a batsman, he is too painfully correct, and, as one who has been hailed as the best of the young school, we are sorry to say it."

The *Fars ty*.

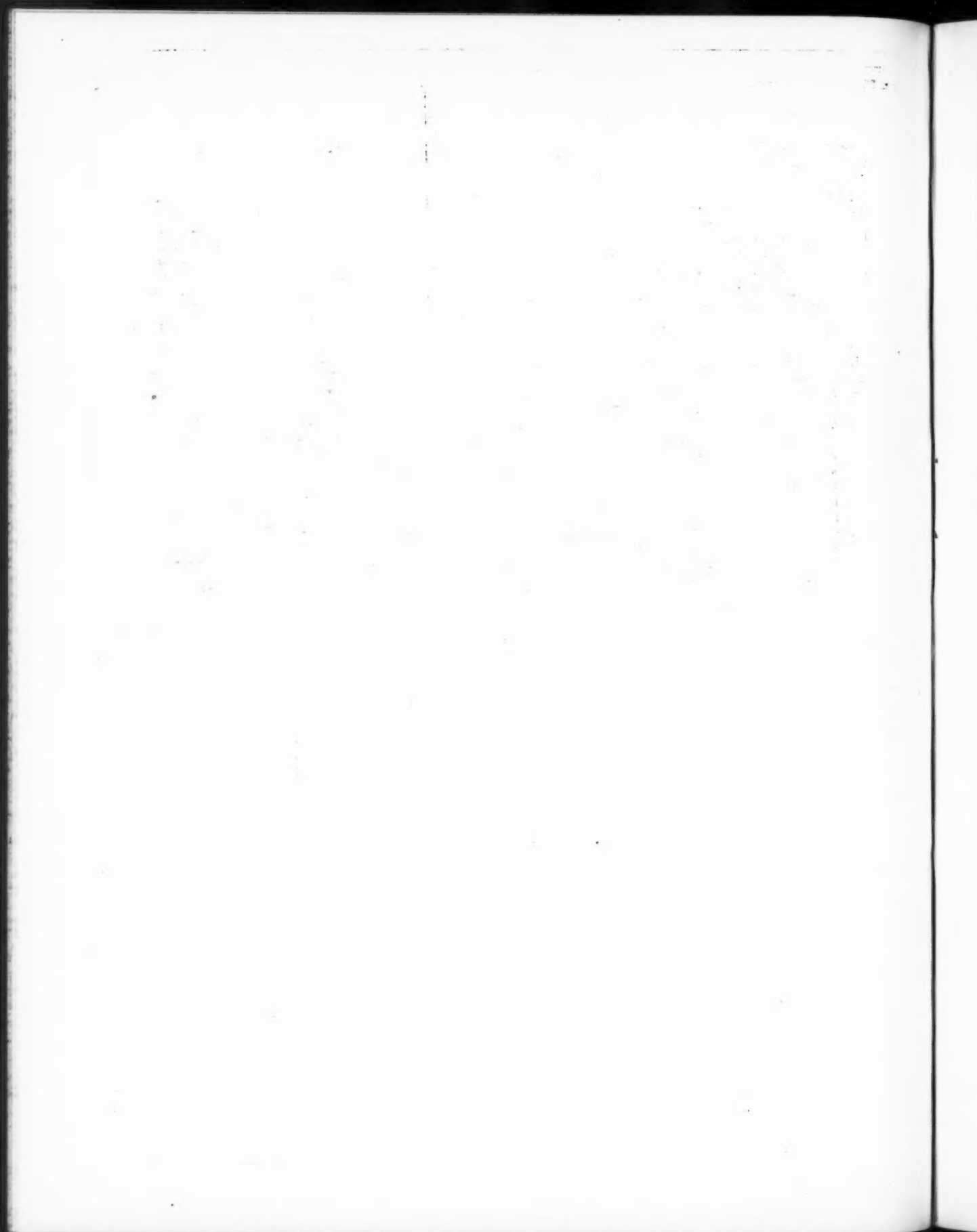
Nothing like modesty in a critic.



A GOOD WORKING NAME.

TIPSTER. "HERE Y'ARE, GENTS. A DEAD CERT FOR THE ELECTION STAKES—(to policeman)—DON'T YOU WORRY, GUV'NOR; THE LAW CAN'T TOUCH ME; LOOK AT THE NAME ON ME 'AT."

[Suggested by the result of the East Nottingham Election Petition.]





WHY NOT A DEVELOPMENT OF THE "RIGHT TO WORK" AGITATION—FOR ARTISTS?

THE DIVA'S FIRST BREAK-DOWN.

HEARTRENDING SCENE.

[Our sympathies are all with a certain distinguished prima donna, who had a nervous collapse the other day during her first public speech. We should feel just like that on our first appearance at Covent Garden as the heroine of *Rigoletto* or *La Bohème*.]

On Friday last Madame Adelaide Brisbani, the famous antipodean *cantatrice*, paid a visit to the Leadenhall Conservatoire of Music, where she has recently founded an annual prize of £40 for the best essay on "Interviewing a Prima Donna."

The visit, it should be added, happily coincided with the anniversary of Madame Brisbani's birthday, and the Committee of the School signalled the occasion by presenting the diva with a superb enamelled chronometer, jewelled in 24 holes, one for each year of Madame's life.

On her arrival at the main entrance the illustrious prima donna was pre-

sented with a magnificent bouquet by Master Isidore Golofino, aged 10, the Cold Storage Scholar, and one of the most talented flautists of his or any other age. The bouquet was composed of choice Borneo blooms, draped over an underdress of green brocade, the *décolletage* being relieved with traceries of pale coffee-coloured *ninon*. Madame Brisbani graciously acknowledged the gift with one of her flashing smiles, and, taking the arm of the Director, Sir Canterbury Lamb, proceeded at once to the antiseptic auditorium, where, besides the 60 professors, all dressed in dainty white nainsook with large bows of blue ribbon on their *charmeuse* pelisses, the 400 girl students were seated in rows wearing overdresses of moonlight blue satin, with crystal panels ornamented with pale pink pilaff.

Madame Brisbani had a marvellous reception, all the professors tumultuously cheering and waving their pelisses, while the students, headed by Miss Claudia Clear, indulged in strepitous outbursts of Kentish fire. When

silence was at last restored, Madame Brisbani ascended the rostrum and began her address. After a graceful tribute to Sir Canterbury Lamb and a pathetic reference to the fact that she would never see twenty-four again, Madame Brisbani launched in *medias res*. "To sing divinely," she observed, "you must steep yourself in the most divine music. If you do not love music you must learn to love it by listening to the most lovely singers. Practice makes perfect, but imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Above all, remember that Rome was not built in a day. Aim high and ever 'hitch your waggon to a star'—for choice an operatic star—and let your ambition be ever on the top speed. Steep your souls in the classics; fill your minds with HERBERT SPENCER'S *Faerie Queene*, DAN CHAUCER'S *Pilgrim's Progress*, BROWNING'S *Sordello*, WILLETT'S *Songs before Sunrise*, and many other of the superb lyric ebullitions in which our lovely language is so rich."

At this point there was an ominous break in the golden voice of the speaker, and suddenly, with a despairing *moue*, she whispered in an indescribably pathetic aside to Sir Canterbury Lamb, "I can't go on with this; it's really too thick." Encouraged by the Director's assurances she struggled on for a few more sentences, only to break down hopelessly in an interesting passage, in which she recommended the would-be *prima donna* to make a point of reading aloud at least fifty lines every morning from PLATO'S *Republic* or ARISTOTLE'S *Ethics*. "I cannot go on," she cried in poignant accents; "I really cannot stick it out. I have never referred to ARISTOTLE in public before and it makes me too nervous."

The consternation amongst the audience was most painful to witness, but after an agonising pause the tension was relieved by Madame Brisbani's kindly consenting to sing the mad scene from AMBROISE THOMAS'S *Hamlet*, and the company shortly afterwards broke up in paroxysms of the sincerest adulation.

PHANTASMS OF THE LIVING.

By the courtesy of the Editor of *The Dictator* we are enabled to place before our readers a selection from the letters on this enthralling subject which will appear in the next issue of our valued contemporary.

A FELINE APPARITION.

SIR,—When I was an undergraduate at Balliol in the late sixties, I had a favourite cat, a Peruvian tortoiseshell, which suffered from ophthalmia, and which I had fitted with spectacles. It could see perfectly well at night, but in the day required artificial aid—as JOWETT wittily said, *redeunt spectacula mane*. One summer term, returning to my rooms late at night after a somewhat protracted bump supper, I was amazed to see my cat hovering in mid-air. I called to it by name, but it paid no attention and suddenly vanished. When my scout came in the morning I at once asked after the cat, and he informed me that the cat had followed him home the evening before and spent the night in his house. JOWETT was immensely interested in the incident and intended to introduce it into the notes to his translation of PLATO, but for some reason or other failed to carry out his intention. The cat, I may mention, lived for several years afterwards, and in extreme old age was able to dispense with its glasses.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
LEMUEL LONGMIRE.

[We are delighted to have the opportunity of recording an authentic story of the phantasm of a cat. The idea of a cat in spectacles may sound odd, but have we not good historical evidence of a puss in boots? The appearance of a cat in mid-air is remarkable, but occasional levitation



HOW EDWIN SAVED ANGELA; OR, THE STRAPHANGER'S REWARD.

She. "OH, EDWIN! CAN YOU HOLD ON TILL HELP ARRIVES!"

Edwin. "MY DEAR, EVERY DAY FOR FOUR YEARS I HAVE TRAVELLED FROM SHEPHERD'S BUSH TO THE BANK AND BACK. THIS IS NOTHING!"

ought not to be beyond the powers of so agile and intelligent an animal. We seem to have read somewhere of a Peruvian bark. Had Mr. Longmire's cat, we wonder, a Peruvian mew?—*Ed. Dictator.*]

THE TRAGEDY OF A CRUSTACEAN.

SIR,—When I was Secretary to the Chilean Legation at Naples I had a tame oyster which used to follow me

about all over the house, and feed from my hand, emitting faint cries of delight when I inserted a particularly tasty morsel between its upper and lower mandible, such as a spoonful of ice pudding or a chocolate *fondant*. My oyster—which bore a silver plate on its back, inscribed with its name (Lulu) and my own—was absent one day, and was apparently lost, but as I was dressing for dinner I heard a faint squeak from the floor, and found that I had trodden, as I believed, on my trusty bivalve. I could have sworn to its presence, as it always squeaked on the note of C sharp in *alt*, but when I looked there was nothing there. Next morning a fisherman brought back Lulu stone dead. She had been run over by a motor car the previous evening at a distance of some twelve miles from the Legation.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
ALFONSO AGUARDIENTE.

[We always thought that oysters were mute, but no doubt in the land of *bel canto* the melodious environment may work wonders on the organism of crustaceans.—*Ed. Dictator.*]

GRIM TALE OF THE GOLF LINKS.

SIR,—About three years ago, when I was playing golf on some well-known links in North Wales, on mounting the bunker which guards the Punch-bowl hole I was startled to see a large tiger crouching on the green. I confess that for the moment I was paralysed with fear, but, regaining my self-command, I advanced on the tiger, waving my niblick and singing "Rule Britannia." You may imagine my relief when the monster melted into thin air, leaving no trace of its presence but a slight tigerish odour. That afternoon I learnt that a tiger had escaped from a travelling menagerie at Bangor, though it was captured long before it could have made its way to the links in question.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
PEREGRINE PHIBBS.

[We congratulate our intrepid correspondent on his fortunate escape from a truly awe-inspiring predicament. No one can say that Englishmen are decadent when a golfer dares to face a tiger with no better weapon than a niblick. The choice of "Rule Britannia" was a real inspiration. May we hazard the conjecture that the tiger was attracted to the spot by a natural confusion between links and lynx?—*Ed. Dictator.*]

REMEDIES FOR COLOURED RODENTS.

SIR,—I notice that one of your correspondents recently recommended blue pill as a remedy for seeing pink mice.

But what should the antidote be when the mice are green?

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
MODERATE DRINKER.

[This is a very proper inquiry. Perhaps one of our scientific readers will supply us with the correct answer. Personally, we have never seen a green mouse, though we believe blue hares abound in the Arctic regions—Ed. Dictator.]

MAUD.

STRANGE it is how magic-laden
Comes to every minstrel's ear
Just the title of that maiden
Whom he deems of all most dear;
Sophonisba, Kate, Eunice
(Sweetest sounds on earth to some),
Leave me positively icy;
Maud induces me to hum.

Sovereign word, it seems to strike low
Down within my heart a key
Touched not by immense Encyclo-
pædiæ Britannicæ:
Starry word of wide dominion,
Language by its side is wan
(This was also the opinion
Of the late Lord TENNYSON).

Not that Maud completely smothers
All the passion, all the pain
I have felt for countless others,
Beauties of a brief-lived reign,
Christabels and Janes and Nancies;
Not that I can fairly say,
"These were but ephemeral fancies,
Maud's the genuine O.K.;"

No, not that; the graven memory
Still remains of many a queen
(Just a wipe or so with emery
Serves to make the tablet clean),
Fairer possibly in feature,
Fitter for the poet's lyre—
Take, e.g. that charming creature,
Polly Jones of Brecknockshire;

Beautiful young things by dozens,
Harking backward, I can count,
Still amongst her many cousins
Maud's appeal is paramount;
Once apiece I've wooed their favours,
Hers was empire thrice as broad:
There were three distinct enslavers
Who possessed the name of Maud.
EVOE.

CHECK-MATE.

In the old days the game was difficult enough for the attacking side. My usual opening was to remark upon the passing of another year, and the increase of personal expenses. The first move of the defence was to sit back in speechless astonishment at the insolence of the suggestion, and to say "Pooh, pooh." It being my turn



Scot (overcome with costliness of Coronation seats). "WEEL, WEEL, MAGGIE; I DOOT THEY LONDON BODIES 'LL NO HAGGLE ABOUT A SAXPENCE BACKWARDS OR FORWARDS."

again, I might perhaps remark upon the long years of my service, to which he would reply that I knew very well how bad trade was just now, but that after another year perhaps—and a look of dreamy benevolence would steal into his face. But I would be adamant; I would point out, by the aid of unmistakable figures, how much worse trade would have been but for my labours, and would state the minimum increase of salary I could accept—the sum mentioned being double what my dearest hopes aspired to. With the benevolence stealing away from his face, he would snappily offer one-third of my minimum, which I would reluctantly accept; and my wife and I would spend the evening at the theatre.

By some such methods I have come to acquire an income enough for the necessities of life. But in recent years the defence has had new moves to play, which take all my ingenuity to counter.

Last year it was FORM IV. This year it will be MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S Insurance Scheme. So to-morrow—I am dreading to-morrow, because I am so afraid he may suffer injury when I answer his question truthfully—he will ask, "What! do you tell me you're worth as much per annum as a member of the House of Commons?"

From *The Parish Magazine* of St. John the Evangelist, Notting Hill:—

"PLEASE PATRONISE OUR ADVERTISERS.

FUNERALS and CREMATIONS reverently and efficiently carried out under the personal supervision of Mr. —, assisted by a specially trained staff, at STRICTLY MODERATE CHARGES."

"Mrs. Forbes-Robertson (Miss Gertrude Elliott) achieved fame as independent star in 'The Daw of a To-morrow.'"—*The Daily Telegraph*.
Or, "Margery's Second Time on Earth."

THE POINT OF VIEW.

My mind, such as it was (and is) refused to make itself up in the matter of the 22nd of June, but there seemed to be no reason why I shouldn't have a non-committal look at the stand. So I stood in a forest of planks and gave myself up once more to the problem.

There was only one other idler in the forest, and she was sitting on Row C, Block A, and looking so cool and comfortable that I hadn't the heart to disturb her. But presently she turned in my direction and waved a friendly hand.

"Well?" I said, when I had made my way across the jungle.

"I want three seats for the Coronation Procession," said Miss Middleton. "It's a secret."

"How many people have you told?"

"Everybody in an apron whom you can see, but they never let it get any farther."

"These are all carpenters. Buy a saw or something, and come and have tea with me. You oughtn't to be wandering about alone."

"I've got Mother somewhere." She smiled slowly to herself, and added, "Mother is fun. It's lovely to have her."

"You must keep her," I advised.

"She asked a very hot man with a hammer if the Coronation Procession came past here." Miss Middleton gazed up at the army of workmen busy on tiers and tiers of seats, and sighed happily to herself. "He was very polite about it, and simply said that they would all be most disappointed if it didn't."

"Of course it might take the wrong turning by mistake. Who leads it? It's a most responsible position. I expect he has to know London pretty well."

"They drive him over the course the day before," said Miss Middleton confidently. "Oh, I nearly forgot," she went on. "At the other stand Mother began, 'I want to see some seats.' It sounded lovely. If she had said, 'I want to see some church'—well, she is fun."

"At the other stand? Are you booking seats in every stand? Isn't that rather extravagant?"

"We never get as far as booking; I have to come away long before then. Where do you think she is now? I suppose I ought to go and see."

"She's probably gone to have tea with me. We'd better hurry back or we shall miss her."

"Well, we did sort of suggest it to each other, only Mother said you mightn't want us."

"And what did you say?"

"I said you'd jolly well got to have us."

We made our way out of the stand and turned in the direction of my rooms.

"We'd better get something for tea," I suggested. "Is there any particular kind of bun that Mrs. Middleton likes?"

"She likes just what I like," said Miss Middleton quickly.

We bought a lot of them and climbed slowly up the stairs. There was no trace of Mrs. Middleton on the way.

"She isn't here," said Miss Middleton, looking round the room.

"Unless she's hiding behind the revolving bookcase. No, no luck."

"I wonder if I ought to stay."

"I don't see what I can do with the buns if you don't."

"You see, I'm supposed to be helping her buy seats for the Coronation Procession." She looked doubtfully at me and then smiled.

"Did you say the Coronation Procession?" I asked suddenly.

"Yes, that's what I said."

"But, my dear madam, you have come to the very man. What sort of seats did you want?"

"Wooden ones," said Miss Middleton, "with splinters."

"Well, of course, we have lots of those. But what do you say to a nice window?"

"A window?"

"Yes, I will let you my little window." And I waved a hand at it.

"But aren't windows very expensive?"

"N-no, no I don't think so. A thousand guineas—or five pounds—or something like that. Refreshments included, of course."

"It's a nice lot of window," said Miss Middleton, looking at it.

"It's only right that you should sample the refreshments too," I said as I began to pour out the tea.

"I think mother would love it. May I have a bun?"

"Seeing that buns would be going all the time," I said as I handed her the plate, "I consider a thousand guineas cheap."

"That would be for the 22nd and the 23rd?"

"Yes. After the 23rd we should make a slight reduction."

Miss Middleton ate and drank thoughtfully for a little.

"I suppose," she said, taking another bun, "you'd be having the window cleaned about then?"

"Bother, I hoped you wouldn't notice that. The fact is, you've just come on the wrong year. Now last year— But I dare say I could come

to some special arrangement with my landlord about it."

Miss Middleton went to it and looked out.

"But how funny," she said. "I didn't know the procession went past here."

"It doesn't," I admitted.

"That is rather against it," she said regretfully.

"Of course I should be prepared to take that into consideration, if you feel at all strongly about it. Suppose we say eight hundred guineas."

"Well, I'll mention it to Mother, but I'm afraid—you see, she's so particular."

"It's only two hundred yards from the route. She'll be able to hear everything."

Miss Middleton smiled suddenly behind her hat, as she bent over her glove buttons. Then she smoothed out her frock, looked wistfully at the last bun and announced that she was ready.

"I'm sorry we couldn't arrange about the seats," she said as we went into the street again. "But it was nice of you to help Mother and me."

"I esteem it a great privilege," I said, "to have been of any assistance to Mrs. Middleton at a time like this. Let's see, where did we leave her?"

A. A. M.

THE DANDELION.

WHEN through the dusk the white owl weaves

His web above the wood,
When you can hear the little leaves

Whisper together thick as thieves,

Then, if you should

Try to discover or find out

What waves the baby-ferns about,

Why (we are told)

The fairies pass, a little band

Of little men from Fairyland,

Green-kerchiefed, brown and old;

They cross the moonlight, quiet, quaint,

Up the dark meadow, just to paint

The Dandelion gold!

The Dandelion's fierce and free,

But still we always find,

Although he's fierce as fierce can be,

And prouder than the tallest tree,

He doesn't mind

Their paint a bit, but spreads each

spine,

Just like a spikey porcupine

Of "coral strands";

And, when they've done, with pomp

he views

A crest that beats the cockatoo's,

That's goldier than the sands.

Oh, let us likewise hail with zest

Those who would dress us in our best

And wash our face and hands!



Verger (wishing to ascertain if he should seat arriving guest with the Bride's or the Bridegroom's friends). "BRIDE OR BRIDEGROOM, SIR!"
Nervous Guest. "Oh! NEITHER—NEITHER."



Earnest Speaker (more eloquent than truthful). "AND I ASK YOU, ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE THIS LYING DOWN!"
Voices from audience. "NO; THE REPORTERS ARE DOING THAT."

ALL THE PREPARATIONS.

(By our own Special French Correspondent,
M. Jules Millefois.)

DEAR AND VERY HONOURED CONBROTHER,—First I give you to understand I am not man to mix myself of the affairs which are not mine. I should be worthy to be flanked to the door. But this which you are preparing in London, this Crownment of the KING GEORGE and of the QUEEN MARY, it is the affair of all the world. Everybody can to rejoice himself in it, and we other Frenches perhaps more than all. So I have the honour to say to you that I accept your obligeante offer. Only we will not say five guinees for a letter. After all what is it a guinee? Who serves himself of a guinee? It is a piece abolished in England and we do not know her in France. Let us say more—soon two hundred francs. Is it convened? Good! Then I have the heart free and I can commence.

Quant to my style I forecome you that it is my style to me and it is not the style of the first come. They teach us English at the *Lycée*. Bah, I mock myself of it. It is not like that what one can learn to interhold himself in a stranger language. All what I know I have insigned me myself, it is well the case to say it, and now I speak and write more curramently than my compatriots.

But to the work!

I have a chamber to couch all near of the Strand, not an appartement, well understood, but an all small gite where I have the honour to repose myself on your count, my dear Mister, and to write my letters. It is not big thing, but in fine it is suffisant. The lady of the

lodges is Mistress McAndrew, real type of the Scotch race, meagre, dry, flat, to the tint brown and to the hairs eparsed. I cannot understand her, but in revenge she cannot understand me no more. Donec we are quits. She governs all the house. Her married man dares not find nothing to resay to it. He is a gross buffle, tall, to the shoulders squared, to the red favorits and to the crane bald, but of a baldness to inhume oneself, bald as a morsel of ice. There are two child, a girl of fourteen years named Dolly, of a figure full of taches of redness, nose retrussed and teeth like tombeaus. The boy has twelve years, a young John Bull of the most accentuated. He names himself Bill, and has taken me in aversion. At that I yield him nothing. This morning I hear these two who quarrel themselves on the staircase. They bat themselves, they push some terrible howlments. They go to it at cups of fist. It is as if one had lashed the demons of the infer. Mistress McAndrew is in the kitchen and cannot hear. Mister McAndrew is in the cabaret. Me, I have well guard to sort, occupied as I am in redacting a letter to my aunt in Paris. They bat themselves pending five minutes, and then I hear them who laugh and then they chuchote together. But I hear them. They conspire to make tumble something on my head in sorting. "Ah, little scelerats," I outery me, "you will not dare!" and they laugh again and esquive themselves. What a country where the youngness manks of respect to the more aged!

All to you of friendship,

JULES MILLEFOIS.

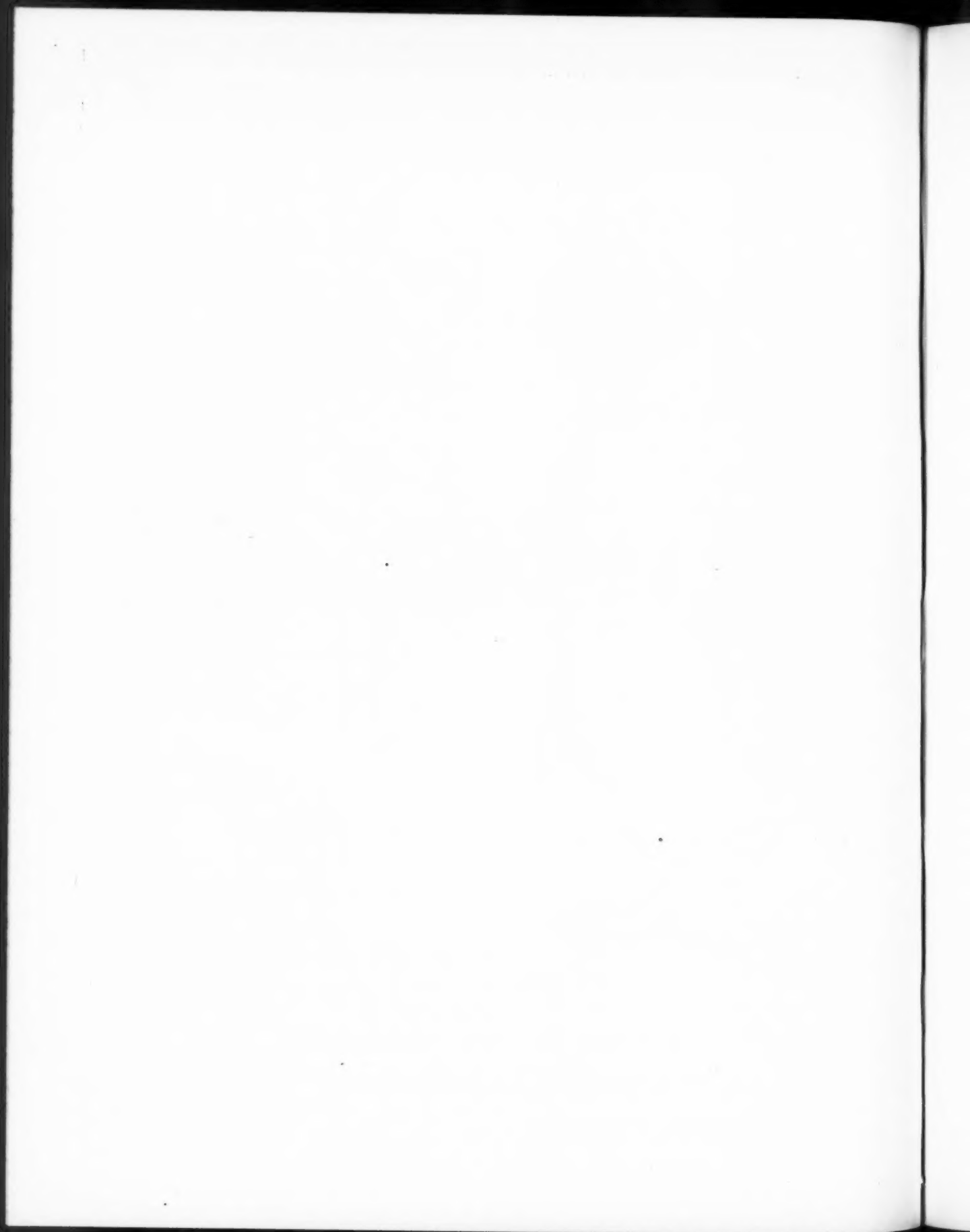
A SEPARATION SUIT: The Harem Skirt.



MASTER OF THE SITUATION.

WALRUS, M.P. "THE TIME HAS COME, AS I REMARKED,
TO TALK OF MANY THINGS——"

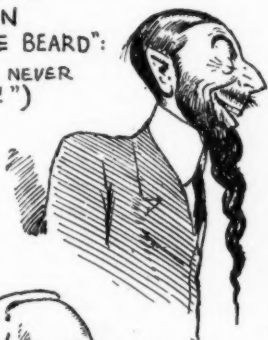
CORONATION CARPENTER. "WELL, NOBODY 'LL LISTEN TO YOU, IF YOU DO. MINE'S THE
ONLY NOISE THEY CARE ABOUT JUST NOW."



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

THE
"WINTERTON
SURPRISE BEARD":
(WELL! "YOU NEVER
CAN TELL!")



THE "WINSTON DEMOCRATIC":

(DESIGNED TO
INGRATiate
THE WEARER
WITH THE
PROLETARIATE.)



By



THE "GREY-AND-WHITE"
"AVIATION" BEARD:
(FLOWS GRACEFULLY IN GOING
AGAINST THE WIND)



THE "NONCONFORMIST"
NANNYGOATEE"
(FOR PRIME MINISTERS)



THE "WIMBLEDON
'HOBBLE'-BEARD"
(PROTECTION GUARANTEED, AND
AT THE SAME TIME VERY SMART.)

CORONATION BEARDS—(NO. 1).

There is a fascinating rumour that, as a compliment to the KING, many gentlemen intend to grow beards during the Coronation Year. Politically, the possibilities are most alluring, and our Artist proposes to anticipate (more or less intelligently) a few of them.

(MR. A. BALFOUR, Lord WINTERTON, MR. ASQUITH, MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL, and MR. H. CHAPLIN.)

House of Commons, Monday, May 22.
—Great happenings in progress and to the fore. To-night Lords without a division passed second reading of Bill abolishing their hereditary right to serve their country as legislators. To-morrow they will have introduced to their favourable notice another measure destroying their right of Veto. In the Commons two days of the week have been set apart for second reading of National Insurance Bill, which, supplementing the boon of Old Age Pensions, will bring light and warmth to countless homes.

Amid this whirl of events House of Commons, faithful microcosm of public opinion, can attend to only one thing at a time. To-day it is the prospect of having its pocket filled with salary of £400 a year. Satisfaction keener since the abundance of the blessing

unexpected. Sum first fixed upon was £300. Almost at last moment, certainly within two days of Budget speech, extra £100 thrown in.

This full of hopeful augury. Amid cloud of questions addressed to CHANCELLOR to-night BONAR LAW suggested salary should be doubled. LLOYD GEORGE, who, having mastered Golf, is learning Bridge, answered in effect: "I leave it to you, partner." As he pointed out, control of Finance is in hands of the House, and if Members wish to double, or even treble, their salaries it is their affair.

He might have added quotation of a precedent for such course. Members of the French Chamber were originally in receipt of salaries of 9,000 francs a year, equal to something like £360 of our money. Four years ago a Member of the Left moved to increase the

indemnité to 15,000 francs, *anglicé* £600. On a snapped division the motion was carried, and is in vogue to-day. The principle accepted, what has been done in Paris may be brought about in London.

Meanwhile, the £400 as good as pouched, Members already asking for more. Why not free passes? The wily WEDGWOOD, totting up figures, comes to conclusion that if Railway Managers are so unpatriotic, so soulless, as to refuse to supplement beneficence of taxpayers by the bounty of shareholders a good bargain would be struck if the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER in leisure moments would negotiate purchase of first-class passes available on all the railways of the Kingdom on payment of £100 a year docked from Members' wages. As the wary WEDGWOOD whispered to Members near him,

the sum individually disbursed would actually be something less than a £100. The other night Members heard with disappointment deepening to disgust, announcement by CHANCELLOR OF EXCHEQUER that Income Tax would be deducted from their salaries.

"Very well," says WEDGWOOD to MORRELL, who has temporarily quitted his residence in the area. "You see how it works. Income tax on £100 at current ruinous rate is £5 16s. 8d. Accordingly we shall be paying for our passes not a £100, but £94 3s. 4d. See?"

MORRELL said he would like to think it over and went back to solitude of his area to do so.

Business done.—Members, elate with prospect of riches beyond the dream of avarice, began week by giving themselves half-holiday. Budget Resolutions brought up on Report stage. Usually occupies two or three days, frequently a whole week. To-night House up shortly after half-past six, not only having disposed of Resolutions but read Finance Bill a first time.

Tuesday.—Like head of Charles I. in Mr. Dick's memorial, question of payment of Members thrusts itself in at unexpected times and places. BENNETT-GOLDNEY asks CHAIRMAN OF KITCHEN COMMITTEE whether, in view of changed conditions following on payment of Members, the cost of meals will be placed on a more businesslike footing. MARK LOCKWOOD, assuming the lofty judicial manner pertaining to his high office, cautiously answered that, when the changes alluded to become law, he will endeavour to find out whether Members desire to spend an increased portion of their income on food.

Hereupon the greedy disposition developed by the unfortunate pledge to which Ministers have committed themselves manifested itself afresh. BURDETT-COUTTS wanted to know whether arrangements could not be made whereby free lunches might be served in the dining-room. KILBRIDE followed with what appeared irrelevant suggestion that, with a view to decorating the tables of the dining-room, the Government should secure the return of the Dublin Castle Crown Jewels. House, seeming to find personal point in this dark saying, laughed consumedly. Lockwood obdurate. No free lunches—at least for the present.

Business done.—Irish Votes in Committee of Supply.

Thursday.—Present House did not know its GALLOWAY WEIR. Since its election his attendance, once constant, became fitful. Within last fortnight there appeared on the paper questions

in his name. But when SPEAKER called on him there was no response. A majority had arisen that knew not GALLOWAY. His old inimitable indescribable humour, the delight of earlier Parliaments, was out of date and place. Gradually he withdrew from the uncongenial scene. And now he is dead.

With him passes away one of those rare characters, familiar in varied developments, which prosaic Parliaments of later days have lost the art of creating and culturing. Mr. WEIR was not funny of deliberate purpose. He was, indeed, absolutely devoid of sense of humour. Wherein lay the secret of his long success. To the world whose personal knowledge was confined to



A MEMORY OF MR. GALLOWAY WEIR.

newspaper reports of his sayings it was ever a marvel that the House should roar with laughter at apparently pointless remarks. His success was, perhaps, largely to be accounted for on the score of paternal vanity. In appearance and manner one of the solemnest of mankind, inspired solely by honest desire to serve the interests of his constituency, the House insisted upon regarding him as a humorist. Having adopted the fancy it persisted in living up to it, laughing merrily whenever the man from Ross and Cromarty rose to put a question to the Scotch Minister.

Often he had half-a-dozen in succession, the series submitted with increasing solemnity of tone and severity of mien. The level of interest of his interrogations did not soar higher than the state of the drains at Pitlochrie, the tardy arrival of a train on a Highland railway, the postponement by forty minutes of delivery of

a telegram to a fishmonger in Cromarty, or the alleged laches of revenue-cutters whose duty it was to prevent the intrusion of foreign fishing-boats.

It was Mr. WEIR's way of putting the question that captivated the House. Slowly rising in response to the SPEAKER's call, for the moment no sound issued from his lips. Surveying the waiting throng, he drew forth his *pince-nez* and with majestic sweep of his right arm placed it on his nose. Another pause, during which went forward process occasionally described in this rigid record of facts as drawing up by hidden hydraulic machinery his voice, habitually located in his boots. In due time through the hushed Chamber resounded a deep chest-note slowly enunciating the words, "Mr. SPEAKER, Sir; I beg to ask the Right Hon. Gentleman, the SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND, ques-ti-on No. 79."

By way of increasing importance of occasion he always made "question" a word of three syllables.

Nor did he, having put his question, forthwith drop into his seat as others use. With another sweep of the arm he removed the *pince-nez*, glanced round to watch the effect of his interposition, and, slowly subsiding, stared haughtily at Members rolling about on their seats in ecstasy at a little comedy that never palled.

Such were his mannerisms. In the man there must have been sterling merit. Representative of the crofters of Ross and Cromarty, whilst others standing higher in public esteem lost their seats in 1892, he kept his with increased majority. At the last General Election he was returned unopposed.

Business done—Second Reading of National Insurance Bill moved.

The New Confetti.

"Cut-glass, china, furniture, and all sorts of useful and ornamental gifts were showered upon the happy couple."—*Ober Times*.

From a railway company's booklet:

"The chief attraction of the Coast Line is its proximity to the sea."

Not always; not at Southend, for instance.

"HILL ELECTION

PETITION BEGUN."

Daily Chronicle.

We thought better of our contemporary.

Commercial Candour.

"Two Large EXTORTION MIRRORS, suitable for exhibitions, &c.: must sell; bargain.—Advt. in "*Manchester Guardian*."

DICKENS POST-MARKS.

DEAR MR. PUNCH.—Having chanced, in a recent re-perusal of *The Post-humous Papers of the Pickwick Club*, upon a few passages that provoked a marginal query or comment, I venture to send some of them to you, knowing that your readers are one and all sealed of the tribe of *Boz*. I copy them in the order in which I find them.

Chapter I. Surely it is rather a pity that DICKENS never re-wrote this opening. Everything changed so quickly after it—humanity swept in and farce hurried out—that it is almost a blot. Nothing, for example, in *Mr. Pickwick's* after-life suggests that he was ever interested in the tittlebats of the Hampstead Ponds.

DICKENS, of course, had comic sporting pictures to live up to at the start. SEYMOUR, their artist, soon died and left him free. This makes it the more strange that he never re-shaped the beginning. Nothing but his genius can atone for it. Had he done so he would have told us more to explain the attraction—by no means patent—that *Mr. Tupman*, *Mr. Snodgrass*, and *Mr. Winkle* had for *Mr. Pickwick*.

Question.—Why is *Mr. Snodgrass* called a poet? Why was no specimen of his poetry given?

Question.—What had been *Mr. Pickwick's* business?

Chapter II. Had he revised the book, DICKENS would have got more reality into the following passage. *Mr. Jingle* is speaking:—

"Here, waiter!" shouted the stranger, ringing the bell with tremendous violence, 'glasses round—brandy-and-water, hot and strong, and sweet, and plenty.—Eye damaged, sir?—Waiter! raw beef-steak for the gentleman's eye.—Nothing like raw beef-steak for a bruise, sir: cold lamp-post very good, but lamp-post inconvenient—damned odd standing in the open street half an hour with your eye against a lamp-post, eh—very good—ha, ha!' And the stranger, without stopping to take breath, swallowed at a draught full half a pint of the reeking brandy-and-water, and flung himself into a chair with as much ease as if nothing uncommon had occurred."

Now, the terrific speed of *Jingle's* utterances is always insisted upon, which gives no time whatever for the preparation of hot brandy and water for four gentlemen during the actual progress of this speech.

Chapter IV. We owe the unfortunate predicament of the Pickwickians at the Review entirely to the original and false scheme of the book.

Is it credible that *Mr. Wardle* ever

had been, as he says he was, an occasional guest of the Pickwick Club?

Chapter V. How did the Pickwickians' luggage get to the Manor Farm, Dingley Dell?

Chapter VII. DICKENS was no cricketer.

Chapter X. What was the status of *Miss Rachel Wardle* on returning to the Manor Farm? It is significant that she is not there when the Pickwickians return from Cheshire.

Chapter XI. I fancy that the antiquarian discovery was a piece of old copy in DICKENS's pigeon-holes before he began this book, and he took this opportunity for working it off.

Chapter XII. All deadweight and lumber have been thrown overboard now. The great epic begins here and never again falters.

Chapter XV. Will no one write a

specimen chapter or so of *Count Smortork's* book? This chapter gives the best opportunity for one of *Mr. Snodgrass's* poems—a complimentary address to *Mrs. Leo Hunter*.

Chapter XXII. How did *Mr. Pickwick* come to have his nightcap with him?

Chapter XXV. Here DICKENS nods badly in the matter of chronology, for, after stating that the rebellious school-boys of Ipswich had dispersed to cricket, he makes the Pickwickians separate for a few days only before spending Christmas at *Wardle's*.

Chapter XXXI. Would so astute a lawyer as *Mr. Perker* showed himself in the Eatanswill elections have briefed *Mr. Phuncky* at all?

These are of course only spots on a glorious—to my mind, increasingly glorious—sun. Yours, A. B. C.



Girl (selling bunches of mint, having followed old gent down three streets). "ERE, AIN'T YOU GOIN' TO BUY ANY?"

Old Gent. "ME! GREAT HEAVENS, WHAT SHOULD I WANT WITH IT?"

Girl (aggrieved). "WELL, WHAT DID YOU WANT TO LOOK AT IT FOR!"

AT THE PLAY.

"MARGARET CATCHPOLE."

To my regret—for it contained a part peculiarly adapted to Mr. LAURENCE IRVING's best manner—there would seem to have been features in his last enterprise, *The Lily*, which made it miss popular success. The last time I saw it the audience was thin and stony. So now, in *Margaret Catchpole* (one had almost said *Catchvote*) he has gone all out, with a candour that savours of cynicism, for the suffrages of the less expensive seats. Sitting in the last row of the stalls, where the enthusiasm of the pit took me full in the back of the neck, I can vouch for his triumph in that quarter. I was not in an equally good position for gauging the emotion of the stalls, but I shall allow myself to doubt if the Higher Intelligences will be appeased with this melodrama. For melodrama it confessedly is, and Mr. LAURENCE IRVING means that you should know it as such, and not mistake it for romantic drama. To this end he has set forth, on an old-fashioned broadsheet, an epitome of events, thus:—"Will Laud is drowned" (he wasn't really)—"Margaret's anguish"—"Alone, alone in the world—alone, alone!" And again; "The Struggle on the Cliff. Hurled to Destruction."

'Ahoy! Ahoy!' Safety for *Margaret* and *Jim* . . . The tangled skein of years at last unravelled. The path of life opened to loving feet."

The full style of the play is "A new, exciting, vivacious and spectacular Drama, entitled *The Life and Adventures of Margaret Catchpole*." And indeed it is all this, being founded upon a career unusually coloured by romantic adventure. To cope with its vivacity Mr. IRVING had to invoke the aid of the cinematograph, an animated tableau, and two inanimate pictures of Australian scenery. The cinematograph presented *Margaret Catchpole* committing her historic theft of "Crop," and riding him, full gallop, in groom's attire and posture, from Ipswich to Lambeth.

Miss MABEL HACKNEY apparently figured in person in the first part of

this episode, but whether she "sat" for the second I cannot say, the pace of the gallant horse being such that I failed to trace the identity of his rider. But if she did leave this feat to an understudy, she shirked little else in a very brave and exhausting performance. She was at top pressure all the time, and if it had been asked of her I am confident that she would have committed before our eyes that deed of heroism (whatever it was, for I missed the particulars) which earned for her—an escaped convict—one hundred guineas, a casket to bank them in, and the public thanks of Sir Lucius Cracknell, Governor of New South Wales. I dare not say

picture. Much relief to our nervous tension was afforded by the quiet but sailorly humour of Mr. FIELD FISHER, who, first as a smuggler and then—after his services had been secured by the press-gang—as a gallant tar in the fighting Navy of KING GEORGE III., was always a godsend. So was Mr. PERCY NASH, as *Philip*, a footman with leanings towards pedantic phraseology and other aspirations. (To him we owe the information, conveyed with a fine dignity, that Australia is "in the Hantipodes.") It was a happy chance that brought so many old favourites together again in the final Act in the house of the Governor of New South Wales, for they had all

been in the neighbourhood of Ipswich when we saw them last. Even Miss AMY FANCHETTE, the buxom and sympathetic hostess of the Dog and Bone at Lambeth, reappeared out there (unless my eyes deceived me) in a different rôle and with her name thinly disguised in the programme. I hardly doubt that the villain and the false hero would have been prepared to turn up too, only they were both lying dead at the foot of a cliff on the coast of East Anglia. That, by the way, was a great struggle on the cliff's edge; but the arguments with which it was punctuated were ill-judged. It was no time nor place for dialectics.



AFTER A DAY'S SPORT WITH THE CINEMATOGRAPH.

Margaret Catchpole . . .
Ho less . . .

MISS MABEL HACKNEY.
 MISS AMY FANCHETTE.

how many costumes, male and female, she wore—a feature in her performance to which Mr. IRVING made poignant reference in a pleasant First-night Speech. But this was only a small part of her task; she carried the whole play on her nice shoulders, and was always charming, sweet-voiced and natural, except when she had from time to time an attack of rhetoric; and that was no fault of hers.

Mr. IRVING was content to efface himself in a part (that of a common Surrey-side villain), on which his sensitive intelligence was thrown away. Mr. GODFREY TEARLE, as a sham hero with an amateur taste for smuggling, played with restraint, and escaped the terrible charge of "breeziness." He made a good figure, but will have to do something with his own well-kempt head of hair, which was out of the

Altogether, if we except the Australian appendix, which seemed rather loosely attached, the play went very well, with a swift and easy action; and, for what it set out to be, offered an exceptionally small scope for ridicule. All the same I have my fears for its future; for Melodrama has its own recognized haunts; and of none of these is the address to be found in St. Martin's Lane. When, therefore, I wish success to Mr. LAURENCE IRVING's adventure—as who does not?—the relation of my thought to that wish is of a strictly filial character.

By the way, I must find out where the Duke of York management gets its candles from. I want some like them—like those two in the First Act, which were stuck in stone bottles. I had not noticed their illuminative power till they were extinguished (it is



Lady (out with a "scratch" pack of Otterhounds). "HAVEN'T THEY GOT SOME KIND OF LINE! THEY'RE ALWAYS GIVING TONGUE, ANYWAY."

Sportsman. "OH, NO; THAT'S ONLY THE STONES HURTING THEIR POOR FEET."

ever thus with the best gifts of Heaven: we do not appreciate them till they are lost); but when Miss HACKNEY blew them out the effect fell little short of a miracle. At the first puff it was like an instantaneous Götterdämmerung; at the second it was as when a policeman suddenly holds up his hand against the sun.

I want the candlemonger's address.

O. S.

"Whitehead opened the bowling, and his namesake, with a late cut, scored 4 and got a single, while Knight made a cut for 3. The players were away half an hour."—*Evening Standard*.

After which, thoroughly rested, they returned to their labours.

"Jack Benison raised his head and rose from his chair; the Vicar crossed to him. He did not shake the boy's hand. Even now he put his foot right into it."—*"Daily Mirror"* *twilarton*.

Not good manners.

"One of the biggest successes of the day was the throwing of the cricket ball, when Bruin's throw of 300yds. 1in. created a South African record."—*Johannesburg Sporting Star*.

It must have needed brawn as well.

THE DAY OF MIRACLES.

Two sights this day have met my eyes
I never dreamt to see,
That near undid in glad surprise
Their credibility:

My lady, with her wonted grace,
But rotten luck withal,
Straight on a bunker's frowning face
Had smote a longish ball;

And, hasting toward that "lie" unseen
With anxious mind, she came
To where the bay gleams blue between
The gorse's golden flame;

Where, in a sunny glimpse, one sees
Brown sails and sea-birds' wings,
And where his love-taught lutanies
The nesting linnet sings.

Pausing a moment's space apart,
The footling lie forgot,
She felt the pulse from Beauty's heart—
And bunkered balls were not.

I saw the frown that marred her fade,
With thoughts of medalled fame:
She guessed that regal Nature played
A still more "ancient game."

* * * * *
That night a second marvel wrought
As, o'er the Downland ridge,

The May-moon rose, and, rising, brought
The witching hour of—Bridge.

Without, one of those angel-eyes
Dreamed, veiled in tenderest hue
Of tree-flowers and young silken leaves
The moonlight filtered through.

Inside, with rosy silks arrayed,
Lost to that lovely sight,
With deadly earnestness she played—
A wasted queen of night.

But while her solemn partner dealt
She heard the night-bird sing,
And turned and, for a moment, felt
The magic of the Spring;

And in her face once more I read
How, whispering in her ear,
"I know a game," sweet Spring had
said,
"Worth two of that, my dear!"

"There has been another fire at Crewe House. Lord and Lady Crewe are absent in Italy.

The origin of the fire is inexplicable and suspicion has been aroused.

Reuter wired on March 22nd that an expedition of eight British officers and three hundred men with machine guns was moving against a tribe in the Sapari Hills in the northern territories of the Gold Coast."

Advocate of India.

All the same, we don't think they did it.

MR. PUNCH'S SUPPLEMENT.**VII.—THE BRITISH MUSEUM.**

THE recent appointment of a scholarly guide to lecture on some of the more remarkable and picturesque of its rarities having drawn all eyes to what Lord AVEBURY once wittily called the Bloomsbury Treasure House, it has been felt that *Mr. Punch's* readers must not be kept any longer from a history of that institution (for it is an institution).

HISTORY.

The British Museum naturally is not very old. A lot has to happen before the time comes to collect ruins in a museum. Hence the authorities waited for Assyria and Egypt, Greece and Rome to vanish as powers before they began at all. This was very wise. The opening year at last fixed upon was 1759, by which time a considerable body of history had accumulated worthy of record. In those days the museum was at Montagu House. The present building was completed in 1847, as it was found that without some such haven of refuge as the portico offers London might have no pigeons left.

UMBRELLAS.

Such is the acquisitive zeal that permeates this wonderful place that everyone who enters is at once asked to deposit his (or her) umbrella. Were none of these reclaimed it is estimated that the British Museum would by now have the finest collection of umbrellas in the world. Such investigations of them as the curator of the Umbrella Department (Sir Hume E. Dye) and his staff of trained and meticulously courteous assistants wish to make never last more than an hour or so, and the umbrellas are returned to their owners. The system of identification is so exact that the chances of getting a better one than your own have been worked out by Mr. HARPER (late of the L.C.C. and now an unpaid official, but still, we hope, a capable statistician) at 3007 to 1.

THE PRINT ROOM.

The Print Room, famous for its poetical staff, is in the charge of Sir SIDNEY COLVIN, who has won the Museum billiard handicap, played after hours in a room in the third Assyrian Court, for several years running. Sir SIDNEY, it has been well said, knows a print when he sees one. Since it is a point of honour with every Museum official to write a book, Sir SIDNEY has compiled a charming volume of the letters of STEVENSON, the professional billiard champion, whose epistolary

style, especially in a series of *billets doux* to Miss Jane Long (known as Long Jenny), is hardly less attractive than that of his cue. Among Sir SIDNEY's colleagues is Mr. BIXON, the poet and the author (although, in view of his apparent youth, the fact is not generally suspected) of the *Death of Adam*. In the Print Room—if you are lucky enough to find it—you may see prints; and nowhere are the officials so unflinching in their courtesy to visitors.

THE ELGIN MARBLES.

The Elgin Marbles (in which the "g" is pronounced soft, as in Bingen-on-the-Rhine) were acquired by the distinguished art-dealer, THOMAS BRUCE, Seventh Earl of Elgin. They represent the manufactures of Elgin, which, according to the latest official reports, consist of watches and watch cases, butter and other dairy products, cooperage (especially butter tubs), canned corn, shirts, pipe organs and caskets. The city, we may add, is the seat of the Northern Illinois Hospital for the Insane. Sir Alley Taw, the keeper of the marbles, is a very paragon of courtesy.

THE POLICE.

A Museum without policemen would be like the play of *Omelette* without the egg, as the Frenchman said. The British Museum has many fine, sturdy, well-set-up fellows who know an anarchist or futurist a mile off, and would die sooner than allow a thief to carry away the Rosetta Stone. Many, it is true, have tried, but no one has got farther than the entrance hall.

MANUSCRIPTS.

The collection of MSS., which are under the safe care of Dr. WARNER, ranges from specimens of the calligraphy of ancient Egyptian scribes to the originals of Mr. HALL CAINE's novels. The latter are guarded night and day by special custodians imported from the Isle of Man, and can only be examined by persons who have received a special permit from the Keeper of British Enormities. The courtesy of Dr. WARNER and his assistants is a by-word in Bloomsbury.

EGYPTOLOGY.

It is notorious that nothing can exceed the courtesy of the chief of the Egyptian Department, Sir ERNEST WALLIS BUDGE, or Sir BUDGE, as distinguished foreigners persist in calling him. Not even a lifetime spent among mummies and sarcophagi has in any way impaired his native sunniness, and even the recurring facetious query of Cockney visitors, on the first Monday

in August, as to how and when CLEOPATRA copped the needle, leaves him radiant and kind. The result is that few visitors interested in Egyptology leave the museum without entering Sir BUDGE's department. Such is his versatility that he presides also over the Assyrian relics; and the same remarks apply to them. Sir BUDGE is the author of more books than any of his colleagues, which is saying a good deal. He is also the editor of *The Isis*.

THE READING ROOM.

It has been computed that were the British Museum reading-room to be closed for a year all the dealers in remainder copies of books would be bankrupt. It is therefore kept open. The Principal Librarian is Sir FREDERICK G. KENYON—a gentleman whose courtesy to strangers and inquirers is unequalled in any other department. The peculiarity of the room in which sits the Keeper of the Printed Books—Sir G. K. FORTESCUE—is that, since every inch of the wall, doors and all, is covered humorously with real or imitation books, once you are in you cannot find the way out. Apart from this nothing can exceed the courtesy of this official, to whose zeal in keeping the printed books must be attributed the fact that one so often cannot get what one asks for in the reading-room.

Fog.

Although the wisdom of the world is stored in the British Museum it has not taught its officials (who are courtesy itself) any way of dealing with fog. No sooner does this November visitant arrive in Bloomsbury than all search for books in the basement ceases and hundreds of readers are thrown out of work. And yet there are little electric hand-torches for such difficulties in every store list at a trifling cost.

FEES.

There is no charge for leaving the British Museum. No tips are allowed. Any head of department discovered in the act of receiving sixpence or a shilling is instantly dismissed. It was his readiness to accept such sums in defiance of the rules that led to the loss of that otherwise valuable public servant, Sir O. Penpalm, one of the most courteous men who ever had charge of Chaldean postage-stamps.

THE FUTURE OF THE MUSEUM.

It is considered probable, by competent vaticinators, that in about five years' time the pick of the Bloomsbury treasures will be located at Pittsburg.



New Housemaid. "THAT BAKER'S MAN'S A NICE-LOOKING CHAP."

Cook. "HIM! WHY, HE'S MARRIED!"

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE does not go altogether as a stranger into the "region between actual story and actual history, which," as he says in the preface to *The Last Galley* (SMITH, ELDER), "has never been adequately exploited." His book, *Rodney Stone*, was a clever essay in this field, giving as it did a vivid picture of the great days of the boxing ring. In his latest volume he has worked less ambitiously, though he hints at something greater to come. He gives a series of ten brief "impressions," based on facts dotted up and down the long stretch of years during which the Roman Empire was the world. He has coloured these facts with "the glamour which the writer of fiction can give," and he has produced a set of very readable stories which help one to form a conception of affairs as they may have existed at that time. I don't know that it is anything against them that the glamour is in some cases derived rather from the possible than the probable. He relates, for instance, the meeting of THEODORA and her son. It is generally believed that this versatile lady lost no time in removing from the sight of the world, and of her husband JUSTINIAN, all trace of so untimely a reminder of her early adventurous career. Sir ARTHUR, giving her a sudden access of maternal affection, rescues the boy from the very brink of the underground well to which he had been doomed, and sends him back to the monastery in Antioch whence he came. Nobody knows exactly what did happen, so this is conceivably true, but personally I doubt it. Again, he makes of MAXIMIN a bluff, honest sort of barbarian soldier, who an hour before the thing occurred had no idea of becoming emperor. This also may be true,

though for my part I put my money on the other side of the picture.

To choose a district of old France,
To strike a path where paths are few,
To leave his resting-place to chance,
Take what it gives and start anew;
To quaff the country's local drink,
To chaff its people, maid or man—
Such things HILAIRE BELLOC, I think,
Can tackle as no other can.

It makes no sort of odds to me
Whether afoot he makes his way,
As just himself, to wit H. B.,
And sees the France we know to-day;
Or whether, in some borrowed guise,
As, say, a military gent,
He sees it with historic eyes—
No matter which, I'm well content.

The Girondin (from NELSON) shows
The second case: it brings to view
A mounted sergeant in the throes
Of war in 1792;
He roughs it with a cheerful smile,
Gets in the end a nasty knock,
As soldiers will, yet all the while
You know that he's HILAIRE BELLOC.

IN one respect, at least, Dr. J. MORGAN-DE-GROOT, the author of *The Hand of Venus* (HUTCHINSON), is deserving of the honour reserved for them who resist great temptation. Some time before the opening of the story, he tells us that

the great PHIDIAS made a statue of Venus, which, having suffered the dismemberment of a hand, was eventually buried, along with the severed portion, in the garden of a Roman villa. In the year nineteen-hundred-and-odd this statue, which was naturally marvellous beyond compare, was dug up by a modern artist, who wickedly resolved to send it to Burlington House as his own work, which he did, and it was—no, not what you think—it was accepted, and praised by everybody. The author's restraint in the matter of this episode filled me with the greater surprise, because I am bound to admit that nothing in his previous handling of the tale had prepared me for it. He is not, for example, above introducing a caricature of the German Emperor, who is represented as deciding the authorship of a work variously attributed to REMBRANDT and TOM BROWNE; and I am afraid that this is a fair sample of the author's humour. Briefly put, indeed, his theme struck me as an excellent idea (there are, of course, complications with the severed hand, which I will not spoil for you by detailing) not very well treated. But it certainly proved that Dr. DE-GROOT has an independent spirit.

What I like about the humour of Mr. PETT RIDGE is that it keeps so very healthy and so little boisterous. His laughter is never rowdy nor his optimism blatant, yet is he optimistic and laughter-loving indeed. Better refreshment at the price would be hard to get; for it is the author's own idea to serve up his seventeen stories and sketches of lower middle-class life in a two-shilling *Table d'Hôte* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON). One item only I would have omitted from the menu; the sarcasm of "My Brother Edward" is too biting a sauce for the use of so accomplished a chef. "Scotter's Luck," on the other hand, is a little masterpiece of ironical concoction, delightful to the palate and done to a turn. Mr. Punch may claim to speak with some authority as a gourmet in this particular fare; yet he would not authorize his Clerk to write one word of complaint upon the back of the bill, save that he had not had enough.

When Stanley Thornfield found a crippled genius in an attic, and, under pretence of placing his manuscript, determined to pose to the world as its author, it seems to me he displayed, not only considerable lack of foresight, but a quite remarkable ignorance of the many stories in which a similar imposture has been tried and failed. In this instance, the risk was the greater because the wonderful tales that Darrel wrote were all about his experiences as a sailor; whereas the pretender, whose supposed triumphs earned for him in literary circles the title of *The*

Sea Lion, had never been upon the sea. Thus, when SYBIL, his betrothed, whose love was one of the proceeds of his fraud, suggested that he should take her to the Pool and talk about shipping, a situation was created that is perhaps more farcical than Mr. PATRICK RUSHDEN, the author of the book, appears to be aware of. He, indeed, is desperately serious about the affair throughout, and invokes the aid of hypnotism and various tragic devices in order to confound a trick which, one cannot but think, would have exposed itself, in real life, within a week of its inception. Why, for example, did Darrel never ask to look at his own proofs? It seems a singular omission on the part of an author with, confessedly, no other interests in life. Messrs. MILLS AND BOON tell me that *The Sea Lion* is a first novel; as such it may pass, but my idea is that Mr. PATRICK RUSHDEN can and will do considerably better.

There is only one fault which I have to find with Mr. W. E. NORRIS's *Vittoria Victrix* (CONSTABLE), and that is a fault for which Mr. NORRIS is not himself to blame. His is one of those unfortunately designed books which look as though their pages are all cut, but which trip you up in the middle of a sentence and send you, failing a handy paper-knife, hunting for a postcard or a railway ticket. I never have these about me, and I hate cutting a book with a pipe or a slipper. These slight and not very frequent sources of irritation apart, the placid narrative of a sculptor in his relations with an original and charming girl, her friends and admirers, is altogether delightful. The sculptor who tells the story, his sister, the hard-headed and soft-hearted Yankee who controls the destinies of everyone without their knowing it, Vittoria herself, her aunt, and even her father, of whom little is seen—all are vivid portraits of people worth knowing. I hope many will make their acquaintance.

Mr. Lloyd George as the "Immortal Bird."

Mr. Punch, along with Mr. LLOYD GEORGE's many other admirers who have been congratulating him on recovery from his serious throat affection, is anxious lest he should incur a relapse through attempting to prove himself worthy of the following passage in *The Referee*:—"Mr. Lloyd George reminds me of the nightingale. At this time of the year Santa Filomena is obsessed with song. She sings continuously. Now and again, thrilled with her own music, the bird falls into ecstasy. . . . Mr. Lloyd George is also a great singer. He has his moments of ecstasy. The result is amazing and beautiful." We like this picture of the CHANCELLOR as KEATS's "light-winged Dryad of the trees," or should it be Druid?



Customer. "No, I DON'T THINK I'LL HAVE THAT ONE; TINK! DOESN'T SEEM TO CARE MUCH FOR IT."